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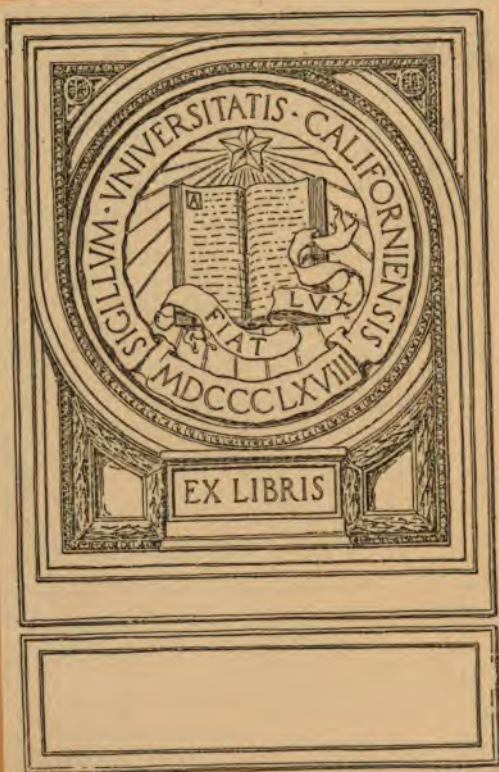
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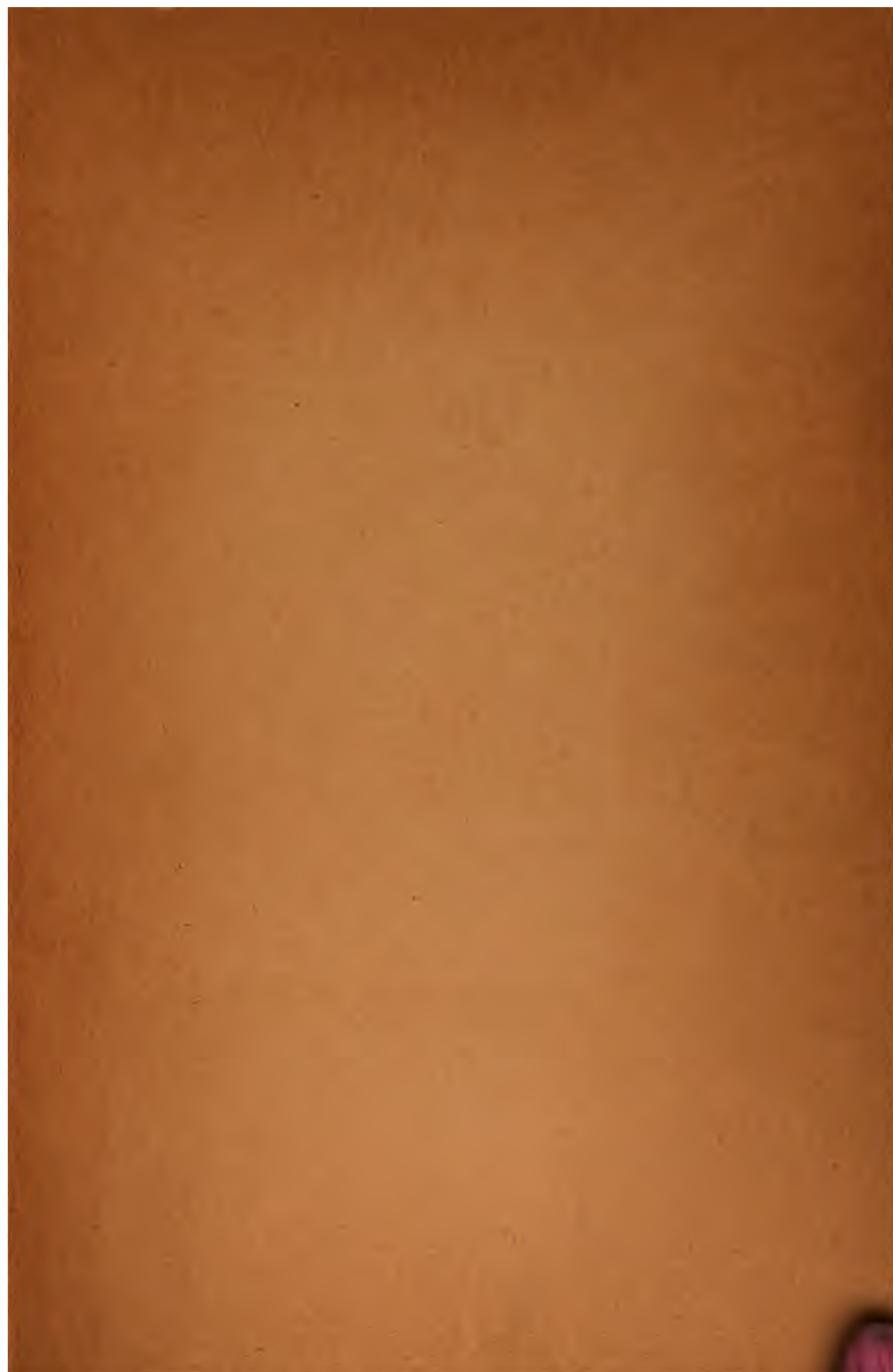
*By*

LEVERETT S. LYON



THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO  
CHICAGO, ILLINOIS







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IN THE PUBLIC HIGH SCHOOLS  
OF THE UNITED STATES**



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# A SURVEY OF COMMERCIAL EDUCATION IN THE PUBLIC HIGH SCHOOLS OF THE UNITED STATES

*By*

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CHICAGO, ILLINOIS



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## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

Perhaps no explanation is necessary as an introduction to a survey of the commercial education that is now being carried on in the high schools of the United States. A few statements, however, regarding the growth and extent of commercial education in America may add pertinence and interest to the material which follows.

During the last thirty years the growth of commercial education in public high schools has been so rapid as to attract to itself increasing interest. The public high school has become a formidable competitor of the private commercial school in the field of business education. The following table shows the rate of growth in the number of students in the two types of schools.

TABLE I  
NUMBER OF COMMERCIAL STUDENTS IN PRIVATE COMMERCIAL SCHOOLS  
AND PUBLIC HIGH SCHOOLS IN 1893 AND IN 1915\*

Schools	1893	1915	Percentage Increase
Private commercial schools.....	115,748	183,286	58.7
Public high schools.....	15,220	208,605	1,270.5

\* *Gregg Writer*, December, 1916, p. 209, and *Report of the Commissioner of Education, for the Year Ended June 30, 1916*, Vol. II, p. 529.

Not only does the so-called commercial work in the public high schools show tremendous strides when compared with the progress of the private commercial school, but over the period of years since 1893 the increase in the number of students in the commercial courses has been out of all proportion to the increase in the number of students in high schools. Also the rate of increase of commercial students has been greatly in excess of the rate of increase in the number of high schools in the United States.

## 2 COMMERCIAL EDUCATION IN PUBLIC HIGH SCHOOLS

TABLE II  
INCREASE IN NUMBER OF HIGH SCHOOLS, STUDENTS IN PUBLIC HIGH  
SCHOOLS, AND STUDENTS IN COMMERCIAL COURSES  
FROM 1893 TO 1915\*

Schools and Students	1893	1915	Percentage Increase
Public high schools.....	3,864	11,674	202.1
Students in high schools.....	254,023	1,328,984	423.1
Students in commercial courses..	15,220	208,605	1,270.5

\* *Gregg Writer*, December, 1916, p. 209, and *Report of the Commissioner of Education, for the Year Ended June 30, 1916*, Vol. II, p. 447.

The educational significance of this increase is perhaps emphasized to those whose thoughts may have been largely concerned with college education by Diagram 1, which shows the relative growth of high schools and colleges since 1889. Plainly the significant development during that period has been in secondary education. Table II makes it equally evident that from 1893 to 1915 a striking amount of the growth in secondary education relates to education for business.

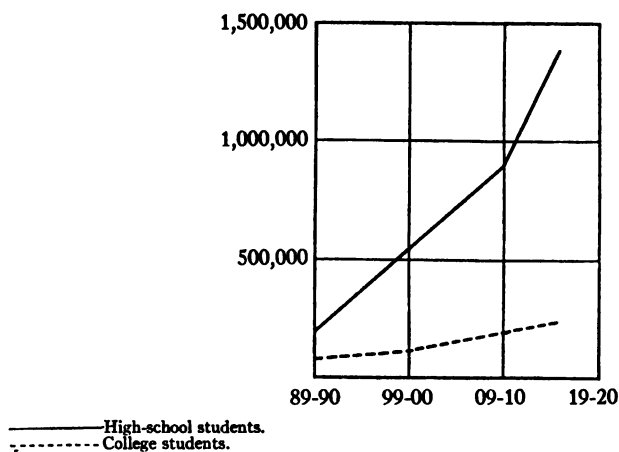


DIAGRAM 1.—Growth in numbers of high-school students and college students from 1889 to 1915.

The facts which have been presented make it evident that the secondary schools of the United States are functioning more and

more largely in training for business. They are replacing to a considerable degree the business college which developed earlier to meet the commercial demands of large-scale, wide-market business in America. The importance of the function which they are assuming and the extent to which the assumption has been made justify a study of present conditions in secondary commercial work. It becomes pertinent to investigate the types of secondary commercial courses, and to inquire as to their length, their organization, their purposes, their methods, and the teaching staff that controls and directs them. Interest is aroused in an examination of the standards that are used in determining purposes and methods and in a study of the social aspects of commercial curricula. Finally, there is reason for an inquiry into the chances of change in high-school business education, for considering the rigidity and flexibility of its structure, and for speculating on the opportunity for improvement and guidance. It is with these matters that the following pages are concerned.

## CHAPTER II

### AN INVESTIGATION OF HIGH-SCHOOL COMMERCIAL WORK

#### A QUESTIONNAIRE TO SURVEY HIGH-SCHOOL COMMERCIAL WORK

About the first of February, 1917, the writer, working under the auspices of the School of Commerce and Administration of the University of Chicago, addressed a questionnaire to the principals of 225 high schools throughout the United States.

The high schools were selected from the report of the Commissioner of Education for 1914, which was the latest statistical volume available. A questionnaire was sent to each high school, excepting high schools of commerce, which was listed as having over 200 pupils in commercial courses. There were listed in that report 192 such schools. In addition to these, thirty-three questionnaires were sent to high schools having between 150 and 200 students in commercial work.

One hundred thirty-six questionnaires, received from twenty-six of the thirty-six states included in the Commissioner's report, were returned in time to be included in the tabulations which were made. One hundred six of these came from schools having over 200 pupils in commercial work. The task of answering reasonably well the various questions asked was no small one. Nevertheless the questionnaires were, with very few exceptions, filled out with such care and pains as to evidence a great deal of interest in the inquiry and to give color to the belief that the data are reasonably reliable.

Commercial courses in the high schools are classified into what are commonly known as the "short course" and the "four-year course." In the tabulations and discussions which follow, these courses are considered separately. As indicated on the questionnaire itself, it was suggested that the information should be secured

# INVESTIGATION OF HIGH-SCHOOL COMMERCIAL WORK 5

from the instructors in all cases in which the instructors alone could supply adequate answers.

The questionnaire follows:

*To the Principal:*

The School of Commerce and Administration of the University of Chicago is making an effort to find out at first hand just what the high schools of the country are doing in training for commercial work. To obtain data in this matter, this questionnaire is being sent to those high schools whose offerings in commercial work we believe to be important and representative. While some of these questions can be answered only by the principal, there are others, we believe, which will be answered more accurately if they are referred to the instructors in charge of the particular courses.

*Please fill out this questionnaire and return in the inclosed envelope to the School of Commerce and Administration, the University of Chicago.*

## QUESTIONNAIRE

1. Name of high school\_\_\_\_\_City\_\_\_\_\_State\_\_\_\_\_
2. Is there a commercial course in your school?\_\_\_\_\_
3. Approximately what percentage of the students are in this department?\_\_\_\_\_
4. Do you have a four-year commercial course and a shorter course?\_\_\_\_\_
5. If the latter, how many years required?\_\_\_\_\_
6. List below subjects required of students in commercial course.

a) In the four-year course  
First year  
First semester

Second semester

Second year  
First semester

Second semester

Third year  
First semester

Second semester

Fourth year  
First semester

Second semester

b) In the shorter course  
First year  
First semester

Second semester

Second year  
First semester

Second semester

Third year  
First semester

Second semester

<sup>1</sup> May this brief note express a great obligation to the School of Commerce and its administration for aid and suggestions in collecting the data presented here.

7. Questions relating to certain specific subjects.

Course	Taught? Yes or No?	Length of Course	Required? If So, What Year?	Elective? If So, What Years?	Course Directed by Head of What Department?	
Industrial History { of England of United States						
History of Commerce						
Economics						
Commercial Geography						
Commercial Law						
Salesmanship						
Advertising						
Commercial Organiza- tion						
Business English (other than academic)						
Other Subjects. Give data on any other com- mercial work not men- tioned above or in Q. 6						

[illegible]



8 COMMERCIAL EDUCATION IN PUBLIC HIGH SCHOOLS

8. Outside of the requirements listed (Question 6), are other subjects generally open to election of commercial students?\_\_\_\_\_ If not, how limited?\_\_\_\_\_
9. Are the same requirements made for girls and for boys?\_\_\_\_\_
10. Is the purpose of your commercial courses essentially to prepare students for office positions, for business administration, or for collegiate schools of commerce?\_\_\_\_\_
11. What proportion of your commercial students go on to any school of collegiate grade?\_\_\_\_\_
12. About what proportion go to *commercial* schools of collegiate grade? (Do not include so-called "business colleges")\_\_\_\_\_
13. About what proportion get positions as stenographers?\_\_\_\_\_ As book-keepers?\_\_\_\_\_ Work requiring both?\_\_\_\_\_
14. What proportion get work as clerks?\_\_\_\_\_ About what proportion begin with other positions in business?\_\_\_\_\_
15. Is there a course in your school designed especially for students who are planning to go into business, but who do not want to do "office work"?\_\_\_\_\_ If so, enumerate the required studies \_\_\_\_\_
16. What studies are under the direction of the head of the commercial department?\_\_\_\_\_
17. How, if at all, is use made of lecturers from business life?\_\_\_\_\_
18. How, if at all, is use made of business publications?\_\_\_\_\_
19. Is a course given in any of the following: (a) office appliances and filing \_\_\_\_\_; (b) banking \_\_\_\_\_; (c) commercial design \_\_\_\_\_?
20. What standards, if any, other than the teacher's judgment are applied in determining efficiency in typewriting and stenography?\_\_\_\_\_
21. In your opinion would a course on the "Anatomy of Business," purposed to show the interrelations of business activities, be valuable to high-school commercial pupils?\_\_\_\_\_
22. What are the chief commendations and criticisms of business men which you hear on the products of high-school commercial courses?\_\_\_\_\_
23. In what ways do you find the requirements of business men different for boys and girls?\_\_\_\_\_

Signed \_\_\_\_\_

PURPOSES OF OPENING QUESTIONS OF THE QUESTIONNAIRE

The first group of questions, Nos. 1-5, was designed: (a) to make possible a classification of the reports received according to states and cities; (b) to indicate the percentage of students taking commercial work in the various schools; (c) to show the schools and the percentage of schools offering both a four-year course and a short course; (d) to indicate the percentages of schools giving short courses; (e) to show the lengths of short courses.

GEOGRAPHICAL CLASSIFICATION OF THE REPORTS RECEIVED

Few comments are needed regarding the geographical classification of the reports. As has already been indicated, reports were

received from twenty-six of the thirty-six states included in the Commissioner's report. They were distributed from New York to California, and from Michigan to Alabama, approximately in proportion to the density of population.

#### PERCENTAGE OF STUDENTS IN COMMERCIAL COURSES

A summary of the data dealing with the percentage of pupils in commercial courses indicates that, of the 136 schools replying to the questionnaire, 123, 90.5 per cent, gave the percentage of students in commercial work. An examination of Diagram 2 will indicate the distribution reported. Vertical bars in this diagram show the number of schools reporting various percentages of pupils in commercial work. It will be suspected after a moment's study of this diagram that the percentages stated by school officials are not absolutely accurate. Clearly, these officials sent in their reports in convenient numbers that only approximated the percentages of their students that are in commercial work.

Sixteen schools, 13 per cent of those answering this question, reported 20 per cent of their students in commercial courses. Twenty-one schools, 17.9 per cent of those reporting, estimated one-third of their students to be in commercial work, and 15 schools, 12.3 per cent, indicated that 40 per cent of their students were in commercial courses. No school reported less than 10 per cent of their pupils in commercial courses, 9 reported 50 per cent, and 4 reported 60 per cent. Three schools reported more than 60 per cent of their students in this type of work. Plainly the mode is in the neighborhood of  $33\frac{1}{3}$  per cent. Diagram 2 shows that a larger number of schools reported 20 per cent of their students in commercial courses than reported 25 per cent, 30 per cent, or any other per cent until  $33\frac{1}{3}$  per cent is reached. The question may fairly be raised whether there are actually fewer schools having 25 per cent of their students in commercial courses than there are schools having 20 per cent. One of two answers must be given: Either there are fewer schools in the 25 per cent class than in the 20 per cent class, or the convenience of the numbers 20 per cent and  $33\frac{1}{3}$  per cent has resulted in their use for approximation. Similar questions arise in regard to the percentages reported between  $33\frac{1}{3}$  and 40 per cent, 40 and 50 per cent, and 50 and 60 per cent. The second answer, that convenient numbers for approximation were used, is probably the more correct explanation.

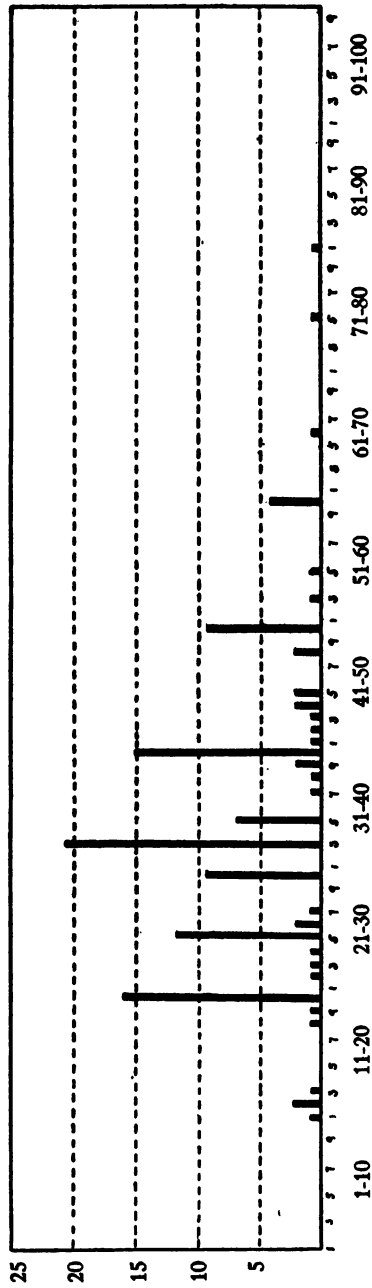


DIAGRAM 2.—Number of schools reporting various percentages of pupils in commercial courses, as reported by 123 high schools.

A more accurate picture of the situation is given in Diagram 3. In this diagram the percentages 11-20, 21-30, etc., have been grouped together, and we thus secure a basis for representation in groups of percentages.

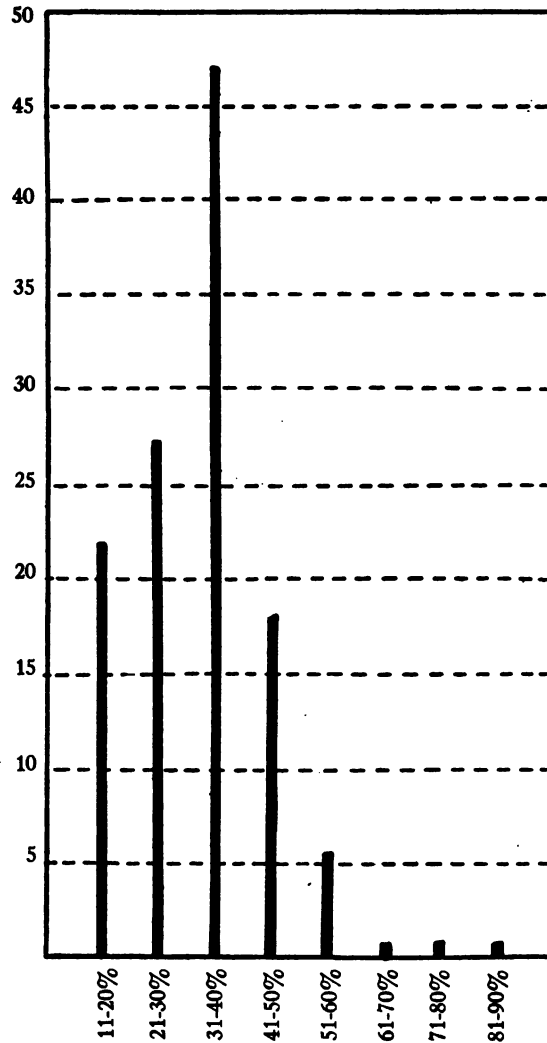


DIAGRAM 3.—Number of schools reporting various percentages of pupils in commercial courses, as reported by 123 high schools.

## THE LENGTH OF COMMERCIAL COURSES

One hundred twenty-six schools reported that a four-year commercial course is offered. This is 90 per cent of the 136 that reported. Forty-five schools, 32.3 per cent, reported that a four-year course and a short course were given, and 11 schools, 8 per cent, reported a short course only. Fifty-six schools, 41.19 per cent, reported short courses. The term "short course" is used here to indicate any commercial course of less than four years, but it should be observed that there have developed in secondary commercial work short courses of two very distinct types. The first, which is by far the more common, is the course of one, two, or three years which usually, though not always, terminates in securing for the student some definite diploma or certificate, and which is designed purely to meet the demands of those students who wish to be rapidly qualified for clerical positions. This type of short course is well represented by the courses of study submitted by the Central High School and the McKinley High School of St. Louis. Both schools reported two-year courses and in addition two distinct one-year courses. The one-year courses in St. Louis were reported to be organized as a "Bookkeeping Course" and a "Stenographic Course."<sup>1</sup>

The second type of short course is commonly called the postgraduate short course. It is, as the term implies, a course that is offered essentially to students who have completed their high-school work. Naturally it is not limited to students who have taken commercial work in high school, but is open to any high-school graduate, and in fact often accepts seniors from any of the other courses. The Dorchester High School of Boston, Massachusetts, the East Orange High School of East Orange, New Jersey, the Madison High School of Madison, Wisconsin, and the Lewis and Clark High School of Spokane, Washington, all reported a short course of this type.<sup>2</sup> The appearance of these courses gives evidence of one of the more significant developments in this field of education. It indicates an acceptance of the responsibility for

<sup>1</sup> The writer has learned that there has been, since the course of study referred to above was submitted, a decided revision of commercial work in the St. Louis High Schools. Indications are that St. Louis is planning great improvements.

<sup>2</sup> Since the questionnaires were returned the city of Chicago has established several postgraduate short commercial courses in different sections of the city. Correspondence or interviews with directors of these postgraduate courses indicate high satisfaction with them. Chicago's experience is thus far too new for final conclusions.

technical training and at the same time shows a recognition of the need of broader training to make technique most effective.

#### LENGTH OF THE SHORT COURSE

Fifty-six schools, 41.1 per cent of those reporting, indicated that a short course was offered. The length of these short courses varies from one to three years. The two-year course is the most popular of the short courses. Thirty-five, 62.5 per cent of the 56 schools reporting short courses, reported two-year courses. Table III shows the variation in length of the short courses.

TABLE III

LENGTHS OF SHORT COURSES IN COMMERCIAL WORK IN 56 SCHOOLS\*

SCHOOLS REPORTING	LENGTH OF COURSES			
	3 Years	2½ Years	2 Years	1 Year
No. of schools reporting.....	16	1	35	8
Percentage of total.....	28.5	1.8	62.5	14.2

\*Some schools report several short courses of different lengths.

#### REQUIREMENTS OF COMMERCIAL TECHNICAL SUBJECTS

Question No. 6 of the questionnaire asked for a list of subjects required of students in the commercial course. In the tabulations the subjects were grouped according to a classification which will be explained as each group is discussed. The first classification considered included the technical subjects. This term is used to include the courses which train primarily in technical skill. The tabulations here presented refer only to the four-year course. No effort is made to summarize the technical subjects required in short courses. Stenography, typewriting, and bookkeeping predominate in the short courses. These studies are usually arranged in the way that will best fit the length of the course, and they generally occupy all the time that is available. Under such circumstances it is obvious that a tabulation showing the variation in organization would indicate chiefly the varying length of the courses themselves. English—sometimes business English—penmanship, commercial arithmetic, and an elementary science are not infrequently

## 14 COMMERCIAL EDUCATION IN PUBLIC HIGH SCHOOLS

included.<sup>1</sup> Usually, however, the curricula are *prima facie* clerk mills, masquerading under the deluding name of commercial courses.

The technical requirements of the four-year course are set forth in Table IV. A study of this table shows a surprising lack of uniformity in the length of time required for technical subjects. Inasmuch

TABLE IV  
LENGTH OF TIME REQUIRED FOR TECHNICAL SUBJECTS IN FOUR-YEAR  
COMMERCIAL COURSES IN PUBLIC HIGH SCHOOLS

YEARS REQUIRED	BOOKKEEPING		TYPEWRITING		STENOGRAPHY		COMMERCIAL ARITHMETIC	
	Schools Requiring (of 121 Reporting)		Schools Requiring (of 112 Reporting)		Schools Requiring (of 116 Reporting)		Schools Requiring (of 114 Reporting)	
	Number	Per- centage	Number	Per- centage	Number	Per- centage	Number	Per- centage
$\frac{1}{2}$ .....							1	0.8
$\frac{1}{2}$ .....	4	3.3	1	0.9	1	0.8	35	30.7
$\frac{3}{4}$ .....							1	0.8
1.....	13	11.5	15	13.4	9	7.7	72	63.1
$1\frac{1}{2}$ .....	13	10.8	6	5.4	5	4.3	3	2.6
$1\frac{3}{4}$ .....	1	0.83						
2.....	60	49.5	54	48.2	80	68.9	2	1.7
$2\frac{1}{2}$ .....	7	5.7	9	8.0	7	6.0		
3.....	17	14.0	22	19.6	11	9.4		
$3\frac{1}{2}$ .....	1	0.83	1	0.9	1	0.8		
4.....	4	3.3	4	3.6	2	1.7		

as commercial education in American public schools had its beginning in bookkeeping, which was shortly followed by typewriting and stenography, it might seem reasonable to believe that all matters relating to these subjects would be fairly well standardized. As a matter of fact, the table shows that there is considerable lack of uniformity regarding all of them. In the teaching of bookkeeping, for instance, the reports show that the courses range from one-half year to four years. Two years is clearly the most common period to devote to bookkeeping. Nearly one-half of the 121 schools reporting, 49.5 per cent, have fixed upon two years as the requisite time. The remaining 50 per cent vary widely. Fourteen schools, or 11.5 per cent, reported that one year is given to bookkeeping.

See Table VI, page 17, for non-technical subjects in short courses.



Nearly as many, 10.8 per cent of the schools reporting, have one and one-half-year courses, while a surprisingly large number, 14 per cent, utilize three years in the teaching of bookkeeping. Four schools, or 3.3 per cent, spread their course over four years, and an equal number require only one-half year.

In typewriting, the lack of uniformity is not quite so pronounced. Of the 112 reporting schools, 48.2 per cent have fixed upon two-years for their typewriting course. In this work, however, as in bookkeeping, courses vary from one-half year to four years. Of the schools reporting, 13.4 per cent require a one-year course, 5.4 per cent require one and one-half years, 8 per cent do the work in two and one-half years, 19.6 per cent have a three-year course, and 3.6 per cent have a four-year course.

In stenography more emphasis has been put upon the two-year period than in bookkeeping, although the two-year course has apparently not been so generally adopted as in typewriting. Of 116 schools reporting, 68.9 per cent give two years to stenography, 7.7 per cent give their work in one year, 6 per cent in two and one-half years, 9.4 per cent require three years, and 1.7 per cent require four years of training.

A total of 114 schools reported concerning the length of time required in commercial arithmetic. Of these, 72, 63.1 per cent, give a one-year course. The half-year course is also popular and is used in 30.7 per cent of the reporting schools. Only two schools reported courses in commercial arithmetic extending over a two-year period. Three schools reported a requirement of one and one-half years.

The lack of uniformity which exists in the length of courses in these technical subjects, where one naturally expects a considerable degree of standardization, is indicative of the uncertainty that seems to pervade commercial education in high schools. There is some reason to believe that the two-year courses in bookkeeping, stenography, and typewriting have been emphasized for administrative reasons. Business colleges throughout the country give much more intensive courses in these technical subjects, and, so far as the technical training is concerned, these colleges appear to turn out a product quite equal to that which the public high school produces. There is nothing to indicate that the same work could

not be accomplished in the same manner in high schools. Furthermore, and perhaps more to the point, there is nothing to indicate that a careful study has been made to determine the length of time necessary for the acquirement of proficiency in these technical subjects. It is common conversation among school people that technical courses fit well into a two-year plan, yet the reports indicate that many schools believe that they can be fitted into other plans. Noticeably lacking is a standard time for technical courses, based on careful experiment in teaching the subjects referred to.

#### NON-TECHNICAL SUBJECTS IN THE SHORT COURSE

In a consideration of non-technical subjects, it appears advisable to discuss English separately. One hesitates to classify it as a technical subject, and yet it can hardly be grouped with the distinctly non-technical work. Of the 56 schools reporting short courses, 45 gave data on the English requirements in these courses. These data are given in Table V. This report indicates that English is a subject which has secured a place even in courses so largely given to narrow utilitarian uses as the short commercial courses. A comparison of this table with Table III reveals some interesting facts. Table III indicates that 28.5 per cent of the schools giving short courses have three-year courses. Table V shows that almost

TABLE V  
ENGLISH REQUIREMENTS OF THE SHORT COURSE  
(45 Schools Reporting)

3 YEARS		2 YEARS		1 YEAR	
Number Schools	Percentage	Number Schools	Percentage	Number Schools	Percentage
11	24.4	33	73.3	1	2.2

the same percentage, 24.4 per cent, require three years of English. Of the schools reporting short courses, 62.5 per cent give two-year courses. Of the short courses reported, 73.3 per cent require two years of English. Evidently English is usually a required subject throughout the short course.

**TABLE VI**  
**NON-TECHNICAL SUBJECTS REQUIRED IN THE SHORT COURSES,**  
**ENGLISH EXCEPTED**  
**(56 Schools Reporting)**

SCIENCE													
Commercial Geography*		Hygiene or Physiology		Physiography		General Science		Biology		Physics or Chemistry		Total Schools Requiring Science	
No. of Schools Requiring	Percent- age	No. of Schools Requiring	Percent- age	No. of Schools Requiring	Percent- age	No. of Schools Requiring	Percent- age	No. of Schools Requiring	Percent- age	No. of Schools Requiring	Percent- age	Number	Percent- age
23	40	12	21	4	7.1	1	1.7	2	4	1	1.7	43	76
SOCIAL-BUSINESS SUBJECTS													
Industrial History*		History of Commerce		Economics†		Civics‡		Commercial Law		Local Industry		Total Schools Requiring	
No. of Schools Requiring	Percent- age	No. of Schools Requiring	Percent- age	No. of Schools Requiring	Percent- age	No. of Schools Requiring	Percent- age	No. of Schools Requiring	Percent- age	No. of Schools Requiring	Percent- age	Number	Percent- age
2	4	2	4	1	1.7	7	12	10	18	2	4	24	42
GENERAL ACADEMIC													
United States History		Medieval and Modern History		English History		Algebra		Geometry		Modern Language‡		Total Schools Requiring	
No. of Schools Requiring	Percent- age	No. of Schools Requiring	Percent- age	No. of Schools Requiring	Percent- age	No. of Schools Requiring	Percent- age	No. of Schools Requiring	Percent- age	No. of Schools Requiring	Percent- age	Number	Percent- age
4	7.1	1	1.7	1	1.7	1	1.7	1	1.7	5	8.5	13	22.7

\*In five other cases commercial geography and industrial history were made optional.

†In one other case civics and economics were optional.

‡In one other case optional with algebra or history.

**OTHER NON-TECHNICAL SUBJECTS IN THE SHORT COURSE**

A consideration of the non-technical subjects other than English in the short course brings out the lamentable paucity of general training which is given in these short business courses and the very limited vision of the world with which their graduates enter business. In Table VI the non-technical subjects have for convenience been thrown into three groups. Subjects commonly classified as science are grouped together. A second class is arbitrarily called "Social-Business Subjects." These subjects are grouped separately because they include those general subjects which deal with the social forces which surround the business man and which are sometimes taught under the direction of commercial departments. The third group is termed the "General Academic Subjects," and into it are put all subjects not enumerated in the first two groups.

An examination of Table VI shows clearly that the short courses are not planned to do much else than train along technical lines. Of the 56 schools reporting short courses, approximately 75 per cent require something in the way of science, but only 24, 42 per cent, require at least one social-business subject, and only 13, 22.7 per cent, require at least one general academic subject. A closer examination of Table VI, however, reveals the infrequency with which any comprehensive demands are made in the fields of general training. Science has apparently made some small claim. Commercial geography, which in this discussion is classed as science, is required more universally than any other subject, and yet it is required in the commercial short courses in but 23 cases, 40 per cent of those reporting. Hygiene or physiology, doubtless owing to state law in many cases, is required in 12 of the short courses, 21 per cent of those reporting. Four schools, 7.1 per cent of those reporting, require physiography. A single school requires general science; one other requires physics or chemistry, and 2 schools require biology. This represents the meager claim which science has been able to make in the short courses, and yet its hold is more substantial than that of any other group of subjects. If we turn to the social-business subjects grouped in Table VI, we find that courses of such decidedly business flavor as economics, industrial history, and history of commerce have won almost no recognition. The last two of these are required in two instances, slightly less than 4 per cent of the schools

reporting. Economics is reported as required by only 1 school, 1.7 per cent of those reporting. Commercial law has a somewhat stronger position, inasmuch as 10 schools, 18 per cent, require this subject. Civics is made a requirement in the short course by 7 schools, 12 per cent, and "local industry" is a requirement in 2 schools, 4 per cent of those reporting.

The general academic subjects are hardly noticed by the formulators of short commercial courses. Four of these schools, 7.1 per cent, require United States history, and 5, 8.5 per cent, make some modern-language requirement. Modern and mediaeval history, English history, algebra, and geometry have, respectively, established places as required subjects in only 1 school.

#### THE ENGLISH REQUIREMENTS OF THE FOUR-YEAR COURSE

An examination of the English requirements in the four-year course leads to conclusions similar to those at which one arrives from the study of English in the short courses. Whatever objection against other academic subjects may be advanced by the utilitarian organizers of commercial curricula, it is clear that the need of English is admitted. A total of 115 schools reported on the English requirements in the four-year commercial course, and these reports are summarized in Table VII. An examination of this table shows

TABLE VII  
NUMBER OF YEARS OF ENGLISH REQUIRED IN THE  
FOUR-YEAR COMMERCIAL COURSE  
(115 Schools Reporting)

4 YEARS		3½ YEARS		3 YEARS		2 YEARS		1 YEAR	
Number Schools	Percent- age	Number Schools	Percent- age	Number Schools	Percent- age	Number Schools	Percent- age	Number Schools	Percent- age
86	74.7	6	5.2	18	15.6	4	3.4	1	0.8

that approximately three-fourths of these schools have a requirement of four years of English. Slightly over 15 per cent require three years of English. But a single school, 0.8 per cent, limits the requirements in English to one year, and only 4 of the 115 schools reporting 3.4 per cent, limit their English requirements to two

years. The table shows that 94.5 per cent of the 115 schools require three years or more of English in the four-year commercial course.

#### OTHER NON-TECHNICAL SUBJECTS IN THE FOUR-YEAR COURSE

Table VIII, which presents data gathered concerning the non-technical subjects in the four-year course (English excepted), needs a word or two of introductory explanation. It will be noted that subjects have been classified in three groups: (a) "Subjects Dealing with Physical Environment"; (b) "Subjects Dealing Directly with Social Environment of Business"; (c) "Other Subjects."

Speaking broadly, these three divisions are intended to represent science, social-business subjects (such as those considered in Table VI), and the general academic subjects, typically mathematics, language, and history. These headings are used because the first two signify a business point of view from which these non-technical subjects may be regarded. Any individual business enterprise must make an adjustment to the complex social relationship of which it is a part. Such social institutions as the market, financial structures, laws, and business associations combine with a multitude of other mechanisms to make an intricate social environment for a business undertaking. Certain subjects in the curriculum are an aid in making the student aware of this social environment and in enabling him to adjust himself to it more effectively. Commercial law, civics, industrial history, and economics are perhaps the courses—as courses are now organized—most likely to accomplish these results. It would be presumptuous to assume that these courses are usually taught with the thought that has been suggested above in the mind of the teacher. They are altogether too compartmentalized and separated from one another to accomplish the good which they might. Nevertheless, consciously or unconsciously, they do give the student something of this social environment of business—something of the social-business complex in which lie the duties of a citizen.

In the same way the individual business enterprise deals with the facts of physical science and utilizes them constantly in the conduct of its affairs. Some knowledge of this physical environment to which the individual business enterprise must make an adjustment is gained through the study of various sciences. Again it would be presumptuous to assume that these are taught from

the viewpoint of their functional significance to business. Nevertheless, it is impossible to teach these to commercial students without giving them the opportunity of gaining something which may be useful in making an adjustment to physical environment.

Nothing need be said in explanation of the column labeled "Other Subjects." They are, as has been suggested, typically mathematics, language, and history.

**TABLE VIII**  
**SCHOOLS OFFERING AND REQUIRING NON-TECHNICAL SUBJECTS IN THE**  
**FOUR-YEAR COMMERCIAL COURSE, ENGLISH EXCEPTED**  
**(136 Schools Reporting)**

OF TOTAL NUMBER OF SCHOOLS REPORTING	SUBJECTS DEALING WITH PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT (SCIENCE)		SUBJECTS DEALING DI- RECTLY WITH SOCIAL ENVIRONMENT OF BUSINESS (SOCIAL BUSINESS)		OTHER SUBJECTS (GENERAL ACADEMIC)	
	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage
Schools offering to four- year commercial stu- dents (136 reporting)....	114	83.0	125	91.1	105	77.2
Schools requiring in first and second years (136 reporting).....	93*	61.7	30†	22.0	80	59.0
Schools requiring in third and fourth years (123 reporting).....	10	8.0	106	86.1	62‡	50.4

\*In 63 instances this was commercial geography only.

†The distribution in the first and second years among the subjects considered in this group was as follows:

Industrial history.....10 schools	Commercial law.....9 schools
Economics.....4 "	History of commerce.....4 "
Civics.....10 "	Local industries.....3 "

‡In 29 cases United States history, or United States history and civics, was the sole requirement.

An examination of Table VIII is, at first view, quite heartening to those who hope to see a broader type of education pervading commercial courses. The first column indicates that 114, 83 per cent, of the schools replying to the questionnaire offer to commercial students courses dealing with physical environment; 125, 91.1 per cent, offer courses dealing with the social environment; while 105, 77.2 per cent, offer some general academic studies. A more careful analysis, however, shows that there is no certainty that these sub-



jects will be taken by commercial students. The requirements in these lines of work are noticeably less than the offerings. The requirements have been divided into those which fall in the first and second years and those which fall in the third and fourth years. In the first and second years 93 schools, 61 per cent, make some science requirement of commercial students. This is more gratifying before one realizes that in more than two-thirds of the cases reporting science requirements, commercial geography is the only science required. In the first and second years only 30 schools, 22 per cent, require commercial students to take courses dealing with the social environment in which business is conducted. These requirements, as the footnote indicates, are scattered and varied. The significance of these meager requirements in the first and second years is emphasized when one's attention is called to the large number of students in the four-year courses who do not remain in school beyond the second year. The report of the Commissioner of Education for 1916 regarding the number and percentage of students in each year of high-school courses shows that the condition obtained which is set forth in Table IX.<sup>1</sup>

TABLE IX  
NUMBER AND PERCENTAGE OF STUDENTS IN EACH YEAR OF PUBLIC  
HIGH-SCHOOL COURSES IN SCHOOLS REPORTING, 1914-15

FIRST YEAR		SECOND YEAR		THIRD YEAR		FOURTH YEAR	
Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage
543,206	40.86	354,705	26.69	245,380	18.46	185,873	13.99

There are many reasons for believing that in commercial courses the percentage of students who leave during the first and second years is somewhat higher than the averages quoted in Table IX, yet this table indicates that more than 67 per cent of the high-school students leave without beginning their third year's work.

In the third and fourth years, as indicated in Table VIII, science is required in 10 schools, 8 per cent of those reporting. The studies

<sup>1</sup> *Report of the Commissioner of Education, for the Year Ended June 30, 1916, Vol. II, p. 448.*

in the social-business group, however, obtain a noticeable prominence in the third and fourth years. Of the schools reporting, 106, 86.1 per cent, require one or more of the social-business group of studies. In few cases is there much plan or organization shown in these requirements, but it is at least satisfactory to notice that there is a keen realization of the need of this type of work for business students. Apparently the tendency is to crowd this work into the last two years at the expense of science in this period and at the expense of the first and second years. Science, on the other hand, has its strongest—almost its only—hold in the first two years.

An examination of the general subjects required in the four-year commercial course shows that commercial work and academic training have not established intimate relations. In the first two years 59 per cent of the reporting schools make some requirements, and in the last two years 50 per cent require commercial students to take some general subject or subjects. Usually, however, these requirements are limited, as is shown in the case of the third and the fourth years, in which United States history or United States history and civics is the sole general academic requirement in 29 of the 62 schools that require some general academic work.

#### CONCLUSIONS

Three conclusions are inevitable from a review of the data which we have been considering. The first of these conclusions is that the high-school commercial course is still dominated by heredity. It is still in the grip of its inheritance from the business colleges from which it so largely sprang. Brought into the secondary-school world to compete with private commercial education, fathered in its beginnings almost entirely by the graduates of business colleges, finding its ideals largely in an imitation of its competitors, the high-school commercial course has in great measure remained as it began—a technical training course, giving instruction in mechanical routine. In performing this function it has been encouraged by business men and business conditions. Many characteristics of business growth and change during the past fifty years have been conducive to the persistence of this type of training. The tremendous expansion of business in that era immeasurably multiplied the demand for clerical performance which was first met by the business college. Subordinate office positions have,

under modern organization, been very considerably routinized. This has been accomplished by an intensive specialization in office work, comparable only to the division of labor in manufacturing processes. Thus the developing aspects of modern business have kept in the minds of business managers the need of clerical performance at the same time that increasing size, risk, and complexity have made industrial and commercial undertakings increasingly forbidding, if not impossible, to a great number of persons. These conditions have increased the inherent tendency of the high-school commercial course to follow its forbears.

The second conclusion derived from these data, and one that is akin to the first, is that the commercial course has never clearly allied itself with the traditional purposes of American high schools. There has been an attachment, but not a coalescence. The purpose of secondary education has been variously expressed. It has been called general; it has been called cultural; it has been called a training for citizenship. The traditional courses of the high school have been organized into various groups under various heads, but always—poor as the accomplishment may have been—the high-school function has been conceived as one of socialization. In this aim the high-school commercial course has not liberally participated. Bound by its traditions and encouraged by circumstances, it has adhered to its narrow utilitarian ends.

The third conclusion follows from the second. The possibilities of the high-school commercial course, either as a utilitarian or as a social course, have not been perceived, or, if they have been perceived, that perception has not been expressed by an adequate organization of work.

## CHAPTER III

### SPECIAL CONSIDERATION OF THE SOCIAL-BUSINESS SUBJECTS

As has already been stated in the introductory chapter, late years have seen new business subjects appearing in the high school. High-school commercial courses, beginning with bookkeeping, penmanship, and commercial arithmetic in imitation of the business college, added in time stenography and typewriting, and have, in later days, responded to the more recent needs of business.

Since the pressure for markets brought advertising and intensive selling methods into the daily thoughts of business men, marketing matters have been reflected in the high school. Vaguely, too, the business man has felt that he was dealing with a social complex which needed a broadly trained mind as its master. Business has not formulated its feeling of its social relations. Producers talk broadly of the market, the financial situation, the administration's attitude, bad times, labor conditions, booms, business risks, and the public without always distinguishing between these factors or analyzing them in relation to one another. Neither has the secondary educator yet analyzed the social complex of which each business is a part, but has met this vague and general demand of business with general courses in economics, industrial history, histories of commerce, commercial geography, business writing, commercial law, and sometimes commercial organization.

These subjects that have more recently come into the high school have not all found place in the commercial department.<sup>1</sup> Question No. 7 of the questionnaire dealt with a number of these social-business subjects without regard to the claims of various departments. The effort was made to determine how far they are made effective in presenting to the student a reasonably comprehensive view of the social significance of business and the social implications of the technical work in any business enterprise.

<sup>1</sup> An argument, not uncommonly violent, rages in the high schools as to whether commercial English belongs to the English department or to the commercial department.

The selected group of social-business subjects considered were:

Industrial history	Commercial law
History of commerce	Salesmanship
Economics	Advertising
Commercial geography	Commercial organization
Business English	

The questions asked concerning these subjects were designed to learn: (a) the number and percentage of schools teaching these subjects; (b) the lengths of courses offered; (c) to what extent courses are required and in what years; (d) in what year courses are elective or required; (e) by what department courses are directed; (f) by teachers of what other subjects the courses are taught; (g) difficulties and problems in the work; (h) texts used; (i) purposes and methods employed. This last question was asked only concerning salesmanship, advertising, business English, and commercial organization.

Not particularly related to the general purpose of this question, but intended to bring out the extent to which certain new courses are taught, a tenth subdivision was included in this question. This asked merely whether any work in office appliances, banking, and commercial designing was given.

To summarize the replies to these questions required that at least eight answers be noted and tabulated for each of nine questions for the 136 schools that replied. The summaries are set forth in the tables that follow.

#### REQUIREMENTS AND ELECTIVES IN SOCIAL-BUSINESS SUBJECTS

Table X presents the requirements and electives in this group of studies as they were reported by the schools to which the questionnaires were sent. A moment's study of this table reveals the fact that some of these subjects are much more widely taught than are others. Commercial geography and commercial law are far in the lead. Of the reporting schools, 87.3 per cent and 86.8 per cent, respectively, indicated that these courses were given. Economics ranks next in popularity. Sixty-one per cent of the reporting schools indicated that this subject is given. Business English is reported in slightly over 50 per cent of the reporting schools. Industrial history and salesmanship are each taught in about 30 per cent

of the high schools reporting, history of commerce in 22 per cent, advertising in 18 per cent, commercial organization in 8 per cent.

TABLE X  
REQUIREMENTS AND ELECTIVES IN A SELECTED GROUP OF SOCIAL-  
BUSINESS SUBJECTS

SUBJECT	NUMBER REPORTING	PERCENTAGE OF THE REPORTING SCHOOLS	REQUIRING		ELECTIVE	
			Number	Percentage of those Offering	Number	Percentage of those Offering
Industrial history.....	43	31.6	31	72	12	28
History of commerce.....	31	22	25	80.6	6	19.3
Economics.....	82	61	49	59.7	33	40.2
Commercial geography.....	119	87.3	94	78.9	25	21
Commercial law.....	118	86.8	90	76.2	28	23.7
Business English.....	73	53.6	64	87.6	9	12.3
Salesmanship.....	40	29.4	15	37.5	25	62.5
Advertising.....	24	18.3	8	33.3	16	66.6
Commercial organization....	11	8.08	4	36.3	7	63.7

Diagram 4 shows the same facts in graphic form. On the left of the diagram is indicated the number of schools which reported courses in social-commercial subjects. On the right is indicated the percentage of the total number of schools reporting.

Schools which offer these selected subjects by no means universally require them, although in those studies which are more commonly offered the percentage of requirement is high. The history of commerce, commercial geography, commercial law, and business English are all required in more than three-quarters of the schools where they are offered. Industrial history is required in 72 per cent of the schools which offer it. The nearest approach to these subjects in point of view of requirement is economics, which is required in 59 per cent of the schools reporting it. Commercial organization, advertising, and salesmanship are, respectively, demanded of the pupil in slightly more than one-third of the schools which offer these subjects.

#### VARIETY IN LENGTH OF COURSES

That the content of these social-business subjects is far from standardized and varies greatly in the various high schools is indicated by a study of the lengths of courses reported. The

variations in some of the subjects are almost bewildering. Advertising, for example, is taught in courses of the following lengths: two years, one year, one-half year, one-third year, one-quarter year, and one-tenth year. The half-year course has apparently found more favor than any other length of course. In 54 per cent of the schools reporting, this is the preferred length of course. The other courses vary from 16 per cent of the reporting schools to 4 per cent of them. An examination of Table XI, in which the variation in lengths of courses is indicated, shows that advertising is no exception.

Business English, for instance, in 9 per cent of the cases reported, is taught for four years; in 6 per cent of the cases reported, for three years; and in 23 per cent of the cases, for two years. Twenty-seven per cent of the schools which reported teach the subject in a one-year course, while 31 per cent give a half-year's work.

The length of salesmanship courses is almost as varied. Two schools reported a course two years in length. From this extreme the courses are reported shorter by gradations to quarter-year courses which are offered by four schools, 10 per cent of those giving work in salesmanship.

In subjects where textbooks are available there is a less noticeable variation in the lengths of the courses which are given. Industrial history was reported once as a two-year course; it was reported once as a year-and-a-half course, while 21 schools require it as one-year and half-year courses, respectively. The history of commerce is reported in one instance as given for a year and a half, though it has quite generally settled into a year's or a half-year's work.

Commercial law, economics, and commercial geography have apparently reached a stage of quite uniform practice. In 75 per cent of the reporting schools commercial law is a half-year course, and in 25 per cent it is a one-year course. In 73.8 per cent of the reported cases economics is given for a half-year. In one instance, 1.1 per cent of the reported cases, economics is reported as one-tenth of a year's work. In 26.1 per cent of the schools giving it economics is a one-year subject. Commercial organization, a very recent addition to high-school work, is reported by only 10 schools. In these 10 schools, however, the course has been organized as a

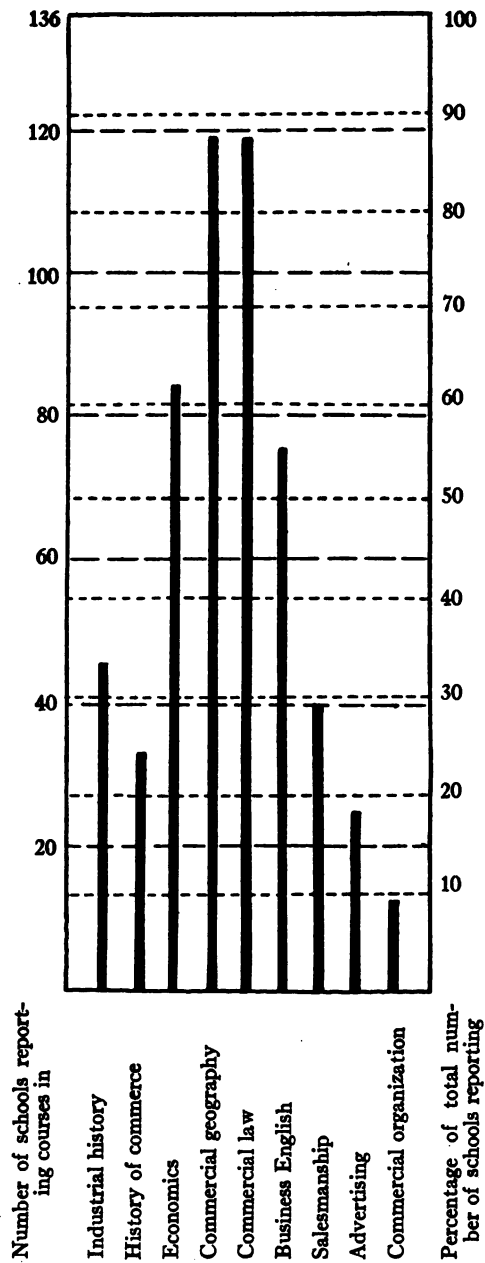


DIAGRAM 4.—Number and percentage of schools reporting courses in certain selected social-business subjects. (Use in connection with Table X.)



TABLE XI  
LENGTHS OF COURSES OF A SELECTED GROUP OF SOCIAL-BUSINESS SUBJECTS

Subject	Length of Course	Schools Offering Courses of Each Length	
		Number	Percentage of those Reporting
	Years		
Industrial history (44 schools reporting)	2.....	1	2.2
	1½.....	1	2.2
	1.....	21	47.7
	½.....	21	47.7
History of commerce (31 schools reporting)	1½.....	1	3.2
	1.....	9	29
	½.....	21	67.7
Economics (84 schools reporting)	1.....	22	26.1
	½.....	61	73.8
	1/6.....	1	1.1
Commercial geography (119 schools reporting)	2.....	1	0.8
	1.....	56	47
	½.....	62	52.1
Commercial law (116 schools reporting)	1.....	29	25
	½.....	87	75
Business English (76 schools reporting)	4.....	7	9.2
	3.....	5	6.5
	2.....	18	23.7
	1½.....	1	1.3
	1.....	21	27.5
	½.....	24	31.5
Salesmanship (40 schools reporting)	2.....	2	5
	1.....	10	25
	½.....	23	57.5
	1/6.....	1	2.5
	¼.....	4	10
Advertising (24 schools reporting)	2.....	2	8.3
	1.....	4	16.6
	½.....	13	54.1
	¼.....	3	12.5
	1/6.....	1	4.1
	1/6.....	1	4.1
Commercial organization (10 schools reporting)	1.....	3	30
	½.....	6	60
	1/6.....	1	10

half-year or a one-year study with only a single exception, in which it is reported as a course lasting one-third of a year.

As has been suggested in a preceding section, it is unjustifiable to conclude from the fact that the length of a course has become standardized that the proper length of time for giving that work has been ascertained by any clearly thought-out or scientific means. All too frequently convenience of organization with other work proves to be the final factor in determining the length of a course.

#### HOW SOCIAL-BUSINESS SUBJECTS ARE DIRECTED

It is said that an Oriental who has been given a fortune will produce a palace and a harem, while an Englishman or a Yankee will turn the same material into a factory or a railroad. A child with a box of wet clay will make a mud pie, but with the same substance a sculptor produces a work of art. The principle holds good in teaching. The interests of pedagogues determine in no small degree the results which are produced with courses. The English department, headed usually by a man trained in classical English, has quite a different idea concerning what should be done in a business English course than has the head of a commercial department filled with the traditions of the business college or with the experience of business practice.

It is pertinent, therefore, to ask who directs the social-business subjects in the high-school. Table XII presents the data collected on this matter. It shows quite clearly that there is disagreement as to the departments to which these various subjects should belong.

Commercial law is directed by the commercial department in 92.3 per cent of the reported cases. Salesmanship is given to the commercial department in 91 per cent of the reporting schools.

Advertising, commercial organization, and commercial geography are each directed by the commercial department in more than 80 but less than 90 per cent of the cases where these subjects are given.

Industrial history which is thought of by many as a subject very intimately related to business is directed by some department other than the commercial in more than 54 per cent of the schools where it is taught. In only 36 per cent of such schools does the commercial department direct this work. The history of commerce (is it because the term "commerce" is in the subject?) fares somewhat better from the point of view of the commercial department.

More than 62 per cent of the schools which reported this subject allow the commercial department to direct it. It is directed by other departments in slightly over 30 per cent of the cases reported.

TABLE XII  
METHODS OF DIRECTING SOCIAL-BUSINESS SUBJECTS

SUBJECT	No. OF SCHOOLS REPORTING METHOD OF DIRECTION	NUMBER AND PERCENTAGE OF SCHOOLS REPORTING THESE SUBJECTS DIRECTED BY:					
		Commercial Department		Other than Commercial Department		Combination of Commercial and Other Departments	
		Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage
Industrial history.....	33	12	36.3	18	54.5	3	9
History of commerce.....	23	15	62.2	7	30.4	1	4.3
Economics.....	66	24	36.3	39	59	3	4.5
Commercial geography.....	89	76	85.3	11	12.3	3	3.3
Commercial law.....	91	84	92.3	5	5.4	2	2.1
Business English.....	57	32	56.1	22	38.5	3	5.8
Salesmanship.....	34	31	91.1	2	5.8	1	2.9
Advertising.....	22	18	81.8	4	18.1	.....	.....
Commercial organization.....	9	8	88.8	1	11.1	.....	.....

One may well wonder how closely economics is related to practical matters in secondary schools when he observes that in 59 per cent of the schools where it is offered, it is taught by some department other than the commercial. In only slightly over a third of the instances where this subject appears does the commercial department direct its destiny. There is reason to believe, although there is no evidence in these statistics to support the theory, that economics and industrial history are both largely in the hands of history departments. These subjects, especially economics, were in the high-school curriculum before commercial work made its appearance. Because they were associated with the history department in those early days, disassociation has not taken place.

It is interesting to notice that in a considerable number of instances the social-business subjects are directed by a combination of the commercial department and other departments. Industrial history is thus treated in 9 per cent of the schools which reported it. Advertising and commercial organization are in no cases thus handled, but the history of commerce, economics, business English,

salesmanship, commercial geography, and even commercial law have a dual direction occasionally indicated.

#### WHO TEACHES SOCIAL-BUSINESS SUBJECTS?

Of perhaps greater significance than the departments which direct courses is the teacher who teaches them. As the teachers' interests are bent, so will the course be inclined. Something regarding the teachers' interests can be gleaned from the group of subjects which they are teaching. What other subjects, then, are being taught by the teachers of social-business subjects? Table XIII gives in tabulated form a classification of teachers who present these subjects to students. In Table XIII teachers have been grouped in three classes: teachers of commercial subjects only; teachers of other subjects only; and teachers of both commercial

TABLE XIII  
NUMBER OF TEACHERS GIVING SELECTED GROUPS OF SOCIAL-  
BUSINESS SUBJECTS

SUBJECT	NO. OF SCHOOLS REPORT- ING CLASS OF TEACHERS	NUMBER AND PERCENTAGE OF SCHOOLS REPORTING THESE SUBJECTS TAUGHT BY TEACHERS OF:					
		Commercial Subjects Only		Other Subjects Only		Both Commercial and Other Subjects	
		Number	Percent- age	Number	Percent- age	Number	Percent- age
Industrial history.....	28	7	25	14	50	7	25
History of commerce.....	20	9	45	9	45	2	10
Economics.....	66	21	31.8	34	51.6	11	16.6
Commercial geog- raphy.....	94	58	61.7	22	23.4	14	14.9
Commercial law.....	91	65	71.4	12	13.1	14	15.3
Business English.....	52	27	51.9	21	40.3	4	7.6
Salesmanship.....	25	19	76	5	20	1	4
Advertising.....	19	12	63.1	7	36.8		
Commercial organi- zation.....	7	6	85.7			1	14.2

and other subjects. This table shows a situation quite similar to that indicated in Table XII. Fifty per cent of the industrial history courses are taught by teachers of some department other than the commercial department. In 25 per cent of the instances named the teachers of the commercial department give this work.

The history of commerce is taught by teachers of commercial subjects only, in 45 per cent of the schools which reported; by teachers of other subjects only, in the same percentage of cases; and in 10 per cent of the reported cases by teachers of commercial subjects and other subjects as well. In the teaching of economics, as might be expected from our previous observations, teachers of other subjects than commercial predominate, having the course in their hands in 51 per cent of the instances given. Teachers of commercial subjects only, teach economics in 31 per cent of the schools where this work is taught. In 16 per cent of the cases an instructor with varied teaching interests handles the class. Commercial geography and commercial law are quite thoroughly in the hands of commercial teachers, these subjects being thus taught in 61 per cent and 71 per cent, respectively, of the reporting schools. In approximately 15 per cent of the reporting schools each subject is taught by teachers of both commercial and other subjects, leaving 23.4 per cent of the geography and 40 per cent of the commercial-law classes with teachers of other subjects only. The teaching staff of business English is rather evenly divided. Slightly over half the teachers of this subject are of the strictly commercial type. Forty per cent teach other subjects only, presumably English in most cases. Commercial organization is in no case reported as being entirely out of the hands of commercial teachers. In one instance the reply was made that a teacher who taught some other subjects as well as commercial subjects was giving the work. In all other instances commercial organization is in the hands of commercial teachers.

Salesmanship and advertising are not so generally taught by commercial teachers as is commercial organization. In only three-quarters of the schools giving the work is salesmanship guided by strictly commercial teachers, while advertising is in the hands of such teachers in less than two-thirds of the schools which teach the subjects.

#### **CORRELATION OF SOCIAL-BUSINESS SUBJECTS WITH OTHER SUBJECTS**

Anyone who has taught economics, commercial law, industrial history, commercial organization, salesmanship, history of industry, or commercial geography, or who has studied more than one of these subjects, knows the intimacy with which the subject-matter is

interrelated. Universities in some instances make rather careful efforts to have these subjects taught in such a way that the interrelations may be as apparent as possible. Teachers of these courses are often asked to visit, if not to take, allied work. The Doctor's degree is not given until a sufficient sequence has been taken to insure a somewhat comprehensive point of view. Such measures, whether or not the teacher is aware of it, result in aiding the student to fuse into a unified intelligence the various separate courses.

How far is an effort made to correlate these social-business courses in the high school? A query attempting to gain information on this matter was included in the questionnaire. The tabulated results are shown in Table XIV. Before that table is examined, however, attention should be called to the fact that the query regarding correlation was not answered in as many cases as might be hoped for. The returns seemed to indicate that the idea of correlating courses was unthought-of in a great many schools. Even in schools where a great variety of social-business subjects were offered, the question regarding correlation of any of these subjects was sometimes passed by with no comment, either affirmative or negative. One would be almost justified in concluding that in a considerable number of the cases where no report was made regarding correlation, correlation was absent.

Table XIV may be used in conjunction with Table XV. It indicates the number and percentage of schools which did not report correlation as contrasted with the total number which might have reported correlation of subjects. This table needs little interpretation. The more recent additions to the commercial curriculum, such as advertising, seem to have more frequent correlation than longer-established subjects, such as commercial law and economics. Advertising was reported to be correlated with other subjects in all but 20 per cent of the schools giving it. No report of correlation was made for commercial law in 63 per cent of the schools reporting on the question. No correlation was reported for economics in 57 per cent of the schools giving the work. It is unsafe to generalize from this, however, for commercial organization, which is still too new an addition to the curriculum to be taught in many schools, is as isolated, apparently, as is commercial law. As in the case of the latter study, commercial organization is not reported as correlated in 63 per cent of the schools teaching it. Three possible types of

correlation were indicated in the questionnaire: correlation with commercial subjects only; correlation with other subjects only; correlation with commercial and other subjects. In those schools where correlation is attempted there is a considerable variation of this sort of effort. In every instance reported there is more correlation with technical commercial subjects than with other subjects. Commercial organization was reported to be taught in correlation

TABLE XIV  
SCHOOLS NOT REPORTING CORRELATION COMPARED WITH SCHOOLS  
WHICH MIGHT HAVE REPORTED CORRELATION

SUBJECT	NUMBER AND PERCENTAGE OF SCHOOLS NOT REPORTING CORRELATION		TOTAL NUMBER OF SCHOOLS WHICH MIGHT HAVE REPORTED CORRELATION
	Number	Percentage	
Industrial history.....	20	45.5	44
History of commerce.....	12	40	30
Economics.....	48	57.1	84
Commercial geography.....	69	57	121
Commercial law.....	76	63.3	120
Business English.....	41	52.5	78
Salesmanship.....	22	53.6	41
Advertising.....	5	20.4	24
Commercial organization....	7	63.4	11

with commercial subjects only, in 100 per cent of the cases where correlation is tried. Commercial law was reported taught in correlation with commercial subjects only, in 72 per cent of the correlation instances, as compared with 11 per cent of cases in which it is correlated with other subjects only, and 15.9 per cent of the instances of reported correlation in which it is related both to commercial and other subjects. History of commerce is correlated with technical commercial subjects in 88 per cent, with other subjects only, in 5.5 per cent, and with other subjects and commercial subjects in 5.5 per cent of the instances where any correlation is made. Salesmanship was reported correlated with commercial subjects only, in 73 per cent of the cases of correlation, with other subjects only, in 15.7 per cent, and with both classes of subjects in 10.5 per cent. Advertising, in 63.1 per cent of the cases, was reported correlated with commercial subjects only,

in 26.3 per cent with other subjects only, and in 10.5 per cent with both commercial and other subjects. Business English is correlated with business subjects only, in 67.5 per cent of the schools that correlate it with other work. It is correlated in 13.5 per cent with other subjects only, and in 18.9 per cent with both classes of subjects.

Commercial geography, in 53.8 per cent of the instances given, is correlated with commercial work only, with other subjects only,

TABLE XV  
CORRELATION OF A SELECTED GROUP OF SOCIAL-BUSINESS SUBJECTS  
WITH OTHER SUBJECTS

SUBJECT	NO. OF SCHOOLS REPORT- ING CORRE- LATION	NUMBER AND PERCENTAGE OF SCHOOLS REPORTING CORRELATION OF COMMERCIAL SUBJECTS WITH:					
		Commercial Sub- jects Only		Other Subjects Only		Commercial and Other Subjects	
		Number	Percent- age	Number	Percent- age	Number	Percent- age
Industrial history.....	24	13	54.1	7	29.1	4	16.6
History of commerce.....	18	16	88.8	1	5.5	1	5.5
Economics.....	36	14	38.8	10	27.7	12	33.3
Commercial geog- raphy.....	52	28	53.8	13	25	11	21.1
Commercial law.....	44	32	72.7	5	11.3	7	15.9
Business English.....	37	25	67.5	5	13.5	7	18.9
Salesmanship.....	19	14	73.6	3	15.7	2	10.5
Advertising.....	19	12	63.1	5	26.3	2	10.5
Commercial organi- zation.....	4	4	100				

in 25 per cent of the cases reporting, and with commercial and other subjects in 21 per cent of the given instances. Correlation in economics, as might be expected from the fact that it is so frequently taught by non-commercial teachers, is even more varied in correlations than commercial geography. In 38 per cent of the cases given it is correlated with commercial subjects alone, in 27 per cent of the cases with other subjects only, and in exactly one-third of the given instances it is correlated with commercial and other subjects. The correlation attempted with industrial history is likewise varied. Fifty-four per cent of the reporting schools correlate this with nothing but commercial subjects; 29 per cent relate it to other subjects only, and 16 per cent combine it with commercial and other subjects.



Many of the high schools in reporting the correlation which they attempted gave specific instances of courses taught in combination. Several such reports of combinations are given below:

{ Shorthand	{ Bookkeeping
{ Typewriting	{ Business arithmetic
{ Spelling	{ Penmanship
{ Office procedure	
{ Business English	{ Economics
	{ Civics
{ Economics	
{ Commercial law	{ Physical geography
{ Commercial organization	{ Commercial geography
{ Salesmanship	{ Commercial law
{ Advertising	{ Oral English
{ Shorthand dictation	{ Business forms
{ Commercial law	{ Penmanship

### THREE SPECIAL SUBJECTS

As was indicated at the beginning of this section, a question was asked to determine merely the extent to which office appliances, banking, and commercial designing are given in the secondary-school courses. Table XVI shows in tabulated form the replies received. As is easily observable in Table XVI, a considerable

TABLE XVI  
NUMBER AND PERCENTAGE OF SCHOOLS GIVING WORK IN  
THREE SPECIAL SUBJECTS  
(133 schools made a report on the questions, among  
which this was included)

Subject	Number	Percentage
Office appliances.....	89	66.9
Banking.....	45	33.8
Commercial design.....	29	21.8

number of secondary schools have introduced courses in these subjects. Especially is the subject of office appliances widely taught. It is perhaps surprising to find work in banking given in a

third of the secondary-school commercial courses, and perhaps as much so to see the position of commercial design.

#### CONCLUSIONS

A number of general conclusions are justified from a review of the statistical material which has been presented in this chapter. First is the fact that the social-business subjects have found their way into the secondary schools to a very considerable degree. Nearly every subject which would be considered as important in a modern university school of commerce has found some place in a secondary-school curriculum. The subjects of this group which are most commonly offered are those which have longest been substantial parts of college and university courses.

A second general conclusion is that the requirements in this group of subjects are not as extensive as the offerings. Requirements are most extensive in those subjects which are most commonly given. There seems to be almost a direct ratio between the percentage of schools offering and the percentage of schools requiring these subjects. One may see this by contrasting commercial law, which is offered in 86 per cent of the reporting schools and required in 76 per cent of the schools where it is offered, with commercial organization, which is offered in only 9 per cent of the reporting schools and is required in only 36 per cent of the schools offering it. From these two conclusions one might draw the inference that, although the social-business subjects are widely taught, the definite work accomplished by each of them is not well enough defined or understood to justify the organizers of curricula to build up and require a definite standardized group of studies which shall acquaint the pupil with his social-business world.

Another conclusion, and one which supports the preceding, is that the courses in the subjects here under review are not well enough defined to permit conclusions regarding the length of time which they should be taught. The variation in length of courses as they now exist in secondary schools, especially in the more recently introduced subjects, is evidence of this.

Social-business subjects, directed and taught as they are, sometimes by strictly commercially minded individuals and sometimes by persons of purely classical training, cannot be relied upon to

present any definite body of knowledge or consistent point of view. The evidence would seem to show that no definite point of view has been determined and that the results which are obtained with these courses must be varied in the extreme.

The lack of clearly determined purposes and methods is further indicated by the limitations which are reported in correlation. All too many schools report no effort to correlate subjects having such intimate connection as salesmanship, commercial organization, and economics, or accounting, commercial law, and business organization.

The lack of correlation also suggests a great waste of time and effort from overlapping and duplication. The student who studies bookkeeping with no knowledge of business organization must gain a meager view, indeed, of the function of that great science. If the function of accounting is presented in the class specifically devoted to that work waste of time is certain unless it is closely related to the work done in business organization and commercial law. The same situation is true of commercial law, industrial history, economics, and civics. In each of these, as the texts commonly present the matter, the student comes in contact with such institutions as the Interstate Commerce Commission. Each book gives certain facts. Unless there is careful correlation, perhaps more careful than is conceivably possible with the present textbooks, there is much duplication. Unfortunately the duplication is not usually from such different points of view that the student's knowledge is greatly widened. Few, indeed, are the high-school graduates who think of the Interstate Commerce Commission or similar institutions in terms of function, or who could show the relation between such an organization and overhead costs of which they have learned only in accounting.

Some considerable correlation of work, however, exists, and the instances which are reported augur well for what may be expected in the future. Handicapped as he is by textbooks of narrow view, public demand of still more limited vision, utilitarian traditions, and more work than any person can do well, it is small wonder that the high-school teacher of social-business subjects has not effected the correlation and organization of work which might be desired.

Finally, the situation shows a need for aid. Aid is needed in the preparation of texts which, dealing with this complex material

of the social-business world, shall so organize it that duplication can be largely eliminated. The material must also be organized to bring out the subtle interrelations of the elements involved so far as that is possible. The subject-matter must be of such a character that predetermined purposes can, in general, be reached.

Aid is also needed, and from the outside, for teachers. The insistent and too numerous duties of the high-school teacher will not allow him at first hand to effect the reorganization which is desirable. A point of view, a body of material, and even methods may, through the proper machinery, be conveyed to the high-school teaching force. It is only from those who are removed from the details, who "can go outside of the house to look at it," that such aid can best come.

## CHAPTER IV

### PLANS AND POLICIES IN SECONDARY COMMERCIAL WORK

The concluding section of the questionnaire was concerned with inquiry regarding the aims and policies used in teaching commercial subjects in the high school. A reference to the questionnaire will disclose the specific questions asked. Certain ones of these questions are, however, listed here and their object explained.

The first section of this discussion indicated the narrowness of most commercial courses as they are now organized. To determine whether this situation is at all alleviated by outside electives for commercial students, the question was asked: "Are subjects other than commercial requirements generally open to commercial students?"

TABLE XVII  
PURPOSES AND POLICIES IN COMMERCIAL COURSES

NUMBER AND PERCENTAGE OF 119 REPORTING SCHOOLS WHICH:				NUMBER AND PERCENTAGE OF 112 REPORTING SCHOOLS WHICH:				NUMBER AND PERCENTAGE OF 116 REPORTING SCHOOLS WHICH:			
Allow General Election of Studies Other than Commer- cial Require- ments		Restrict Elec- tion aside from Commercial Requirements		Make Different Requirements for Boys and Girls		Make no Dif- ferent Require- ments for Boys and Girls		Attempt to Pre- pare Only for "Office Work"		Attempt to Fit for Office Work and Busi- ness Admin- istration	
Num- ber	Percent- age	Num- ber	Percent- age	Num- ber	Percent- age	Num- ber	Percent- age	Num- ber	Percent- age	Num- ber	Percent- age
97	81.5	22	18.5	3	2.7	109	97.3	71	61.2	45	38.8

Recent surveys have led to the conclusion that boys and girls need different training for business. To determine the extent to which different training is offered, this interrogation was made: "Are the requirements the same for boys and girls?" Closely connected with this question in purpose was a question regarding the number of graduates who secure positions as stenographers, bookkeepers, and clerks.

A question was asked regarding the purpose for which the commercial course was designed—whether to prepare students for office positions, for business administration, or for collegiate schools of commerce. To check the appropriateness of purposes, school officials were asked concerning the proportion of commercial students who go on to college, who enter collegiate schools of commerce, and who accept office and clerical positions upon leaving high school.

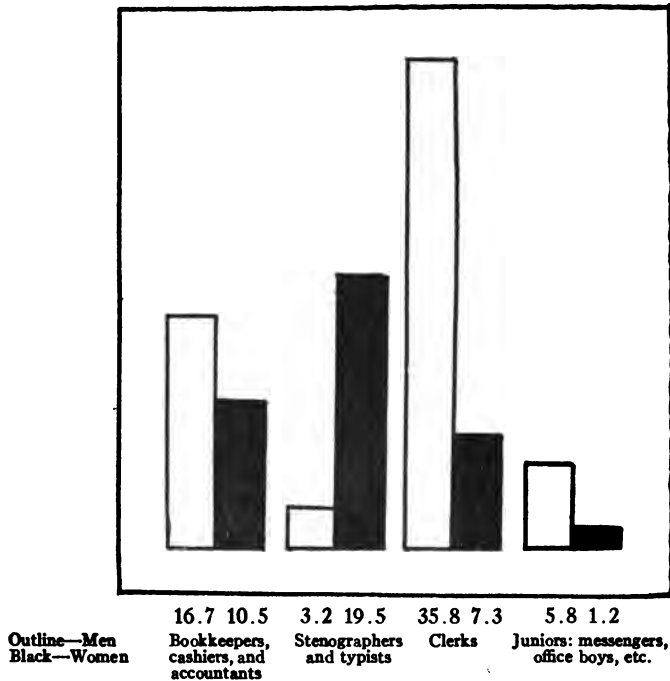


DIAGRAM 5.—Distribution of men and women in non-administrative positions in Cleveland.

Several questions dealing with methods were asked in the questionnaire. The following questions were included: "How, if at all, is use made of business publications?" "How, if at all, is use made of lecturers from business life?"

Teachers were interrogated as to standards and tests which were used in determining efficiency in such technical work as

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stenography and typewriting, and were asked in what ways their graduates are criticized or commended.

Several purposes and policies in commercial courses in high schools have been summarized in Table XVII.

#### FREEDOM OF ELECTION ASIDE FROM COMMERCIAL REQUIREMENTS

A very general election of studies other than commercial requirements seems to prevail in the business courses of secondary schools. In only 18.5 per cent of the reporting schools are commercial students restricted in their electives, once their commercial requirements are satisfactorily met. In the other 81.5 per cent a free

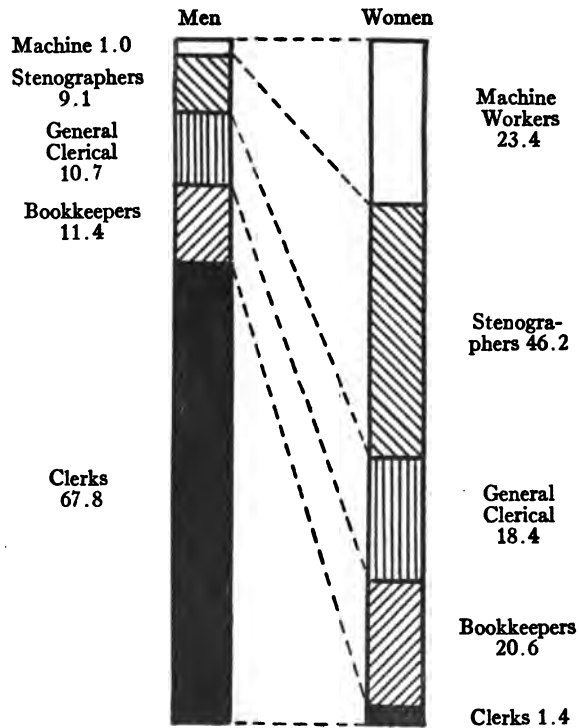


DIAGRAM 6.—Showing in detail the distribution of men and women in office work in Cleveland.

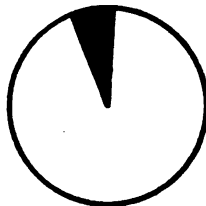
election of studies is allowed. These percentages are on the basis of 119 schools which reported on this particular question.

#### REQUIREMENTS FOR BOYS AND GIRLS

One hundred twelve schools reported on the question relating to the different requirements for boys and girls. One hundred nine of this number, 97.3 per cent, reported no different requirements for boys and girls. Two and seven-tenths per cent make some difference in requirements for the sexes. The significance of the situation is apparent only when one compares the demands in business for boys with the demands made upon girls. A careful effort to arrive at these demands was made in the Cleveland survey. Diagram 5 is taken from the Cleveland survey. It shows the situation in Cleveland in regard to the distribution of men and women in the non-administrative positions.<sup>1</sup>

The different demands made upon men and women are shown in even more detail in Diagram 6.<sup>2</sup>

The Cleveland survey further indicated that, regardless of the positions in which boys and girls started commercial life, boys worked into administrative positions. Diagram 7 shows the distribution of men and women eighteen years of age and over in administrative work in offices in Cleveland.<sup>3</sup>



Men 94%

DIAGRAM 7.—Distribution of men and women in administrative positions in Cleveland.

The fact that such an overwhelming percentage of secondary schools made no distinction in their courses between the work required for boys and for girls is made further remarkable by the

<sup>1</sup> *Boys and Girls in Commercial Work*, p. 21. Published by The Survey Committee of the Cleveland Foundation, Cleveland.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 26.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 17.



data presented in Table XVIII. This table shows that high-school principals have observed business men's requirements to be quite different for boys and girls. As this table indicates, nearly two-

TABLE XVIII  
OBSERVATIONS OF PRINCIPALS CONCERNING BUSINESS MEN'S  
REQUIREMENTS OF BOYS AND GIRLS  
(66 Schools Reporting)

NOTING DIFFERENT REQUIREMENTS OF BOYS AND GIRLS		NOTING NO DIFFERENT REQUIREMENTS OF BOYS AND GIRLS	
Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage
42	63.4	24	36.6

thirds of the schools reporting on this question indicated that a difference has been noted between the requirements in business for the sexes. In spite of this fact, the commercial course has persisted in giving the same work for both boys and girls.

Some of the replies indicating the differences which have been noticed in business requirements are interesting and instructive and are quoted below:

"Girls are wanted mostly as stenographers and bookkeepers and are expected to merely follow directions. Boys are expected to learn to exercise judgment and initiative and advance in the business."

"Boys are expected to grow up with the business; girls are expected to remain in same position until they drop off into the troubled sea of matrimony; otherwise requirements alike."

It is interesting to notice how definitely these comments fit into the conclusions made in the Cleveland survey, where one of the summaries on business education for boys reads as follows:

"Boys' training looks forward to both clerical work and business administration; but as clerical work is a preparation for business and is likely to occupy the first few years of wage-earning, training should aim especially to meet the needs of clerical positions."<sup>1</sup>

This same view of the need of training for administration for boys is expressed in other phrasing in replies received:

"Boys, initiative; girls, routine."

"Business men do not require stenography of boys so generally as of girls."

<sup>1</sup> *Boys and Girls in Commercial Work*, p. 180.

"Find little difference; but Miss C—— says they will take a worse boy than girl, for the same job."

"Most business men want boys who can eventually become salesmen."

"Girls for stenographic positions. Boys for other positions."

"Greater initiative demanded of boys."

"Looking for possible salesmen or executives in hiring boys."

"Business men would make the central aim of commercial training of boys the fitting of them for managerial and executive positions, while they think of girls as only worthy of high-grade office positions as stenographers and bookkeepers."

Such a statement as that employers are "more lenient with girls" and the impression that "business men seem to be more severe regarding punctuality and accuracy with boys than with girls" remind one of Miss Stevens' quotation from *Potash and Perlmutter*.<sup>1</sup>

"Some lady bookkeepers come to the store so late and goes home so early that they hardly allow themselves enough time downtown to go out and eat lunch at all.

"If most lady bookkeepers would spend half so much time over their books as they do over their hair we would get a trial balance once in a while without calling in one of them satisfied public accountants."

One school principal seems to summarize the case very well with the statement: "Generally if you can say a boy has pep and a girl is quiet, you have satisfied the business man."

#### OFFICE WORK VERSUS BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION

Table XVII also shows the percentage of the reporting schools which attempts to fit for office work only, and the percentage which attempts to train for business administration. Sixty-one per cent of the schools reporting make no effort to train for anything other than office practice. In view of the fact that so few schools have differentiated the work given to boys and to girls, it is perhaps surprising that as many as 38 per cent of the reporting schools undertake some work in business administration. Yet, the future work of boys in administration is so evident that the generally narrow purposes of the commercial course need explanation.

#### THE EMPLOYMENT OF HIGH-SCHOOL COMMERCIAL STUDENTS

The questionnaire asked school officers to report on the percentage of their students that found work as stenographers, book-

<sup>1</sup> *Boys and Girls in Commercial Work*, p. 167.

keepers, and clerks, respectively. Table XIX summarizes the reports on this question.<sup>1</sup>

**TABLE XIX**  
**DISTRIBUTION OF COMMERCIAL STUDENTS INTO THE VARIOUS TYPES OF OFFICE**  
**WORK IN WHICH THEY FIND EMPLOYMENT**

DISTRIBUTION OF COMMERCIAL STUDENTS INTO VARIOUS PERCENTAGE GROUPS	STENOGRAPHERS (94 SCHOOLS REPORTING)		BOOKKEEPERS (87 SCHOOLS REPORTING)		CLERKS (62 SCHOOLS REPORTING)	
	Number Reporting	Percentage of Schools Reporting	Number Reporting	Percentage of Schools Reporting	Number Reporting	Percentage of Schools Reporting
Per Cent						
1-25.....	16	17	71	81.6	51	82.3
26-50.....	44	46.8	14	16.1	7	11.3
Over 50.....	34	36.1	2	2.3	4	6.4

According to this table stenography is very commonly the first occupation of commercial students. Thirty-six per cent of the schools reporting on the number of their students who take positions in stenography declared that they place over 50 per cent of their students in such work. Only 2.3 per cent of the schools reporting on bookkeeping asserted that over 50 per cent of their students find work as bookkeepers, while 6.4 per cent of those reporting on clerical employment stated that over 50 per cent of their students enter business life as clerks.

These figures are in rather sharp contrast to those shown for the city of Cleveland in Diagram 5. General census figures, furthermore, show a large proportion of office employees to be in clerical positions. Undoubtedly the terms of this question of the questionnaire were given different interpretations by different persons making reports. In general, it would appear, however, that stenography is a very substantial stepping-stone to other office work, and is with great frequency the type of employment first secured.

A further study of Table XIX shows that of the schools reporting on the percentage of their students beginning work as stenographers 46.8 per cent state that from 26 to 50 per cent find such work; 17 per cent report 25 per cent or less of their students beginning in the stenographic field. It also appears from an examination of Table XIX that of the schools reporting on the percentage of their pupils who take positions as bookkeepers, 16.1 per cent

<sup>1</sup> Where the word "few" was used on a report it was taken to mean less than 25 per cent.

state that from 26 to 50 per cent of their pupils begin work as bookkeepers; 81.6 per cent of these schools reported 25 per cent or less of their students taking employment as bookkeepers. Of the 62 schools that reported concerning their pupils becoming clerks, 11.3 per cent stated that 26 to 50 per cent take such positions and 82.3 per cent reported 25 per cent or less of their students taking places as clerks.

#### CERTAIN METHODS USED IN COMMERCIAL TEACHING

Table XX presents a tabulation of the replies received to queries concerning certain methods employed in teaching commercial subjects. As this table shows, nearly three-quarters of the reporting

TABLE XX  
TABLE PRESENTING DATA ON CERTAIN METHODS  
USED IN COMMERCIAL WORK

LECTURES FROM BUSINESS LIFE (110 REPORTING)		BUSINESS PUBLICATIONS (104 REPORTING)		TESTS IN TYPEWRITING AND STENOGRAPHY OTHER THAN TEACHER'S JUDGMENT (117 SCHOOLS REPORTING)	
Number Schools Using	Percentage of Those Reporting	Number Schools Using	Percentage of Those Reporting	Number Schools Using	Percentage of Those Reporting
81	73.6	68	65.3	70	59.8

schools use lecturers from business life as a means of aiding in commercial work. Approximately two-thirds of the schools which replied to this query indicate the use of business publications.

#### TESTS

The question of standardized measurements in all educational work is one of increasing importance. In response to the question concerning the use of tests other than the teacher's judgments, 59.8 per cent of the schools replying reported the use of tests. These replies gave indications that the tests employed are usually those furnished by textbook and machine companies, such as the Gregg shorthand tests and the Underwood tests in typewriting. So far as can be ascertained, scientific tests to measure progress in skill under standardized conditions have not been worked out and

are not applied. As has been already intimated in previous sections, no one has yet proved what the proper length of the typewriting and stenographic courses should be. Neither has the skill which should be acquired with definite hours of work been ascertained.

#### TEXTBOOKS IN THE SOCIAL-BUSINESS SUBJECTS

Evidence in plenty was given in the returned questionnaires to show that textbooks now available for use in teaching social-business subjects in the secondary schools are not satisfactory. The textbooks used for this group of subjects in high schools are, for the most part, written by university professors who have long been removed from contact with young students. Further, the authors of textbooks are frequently more mindful of their academic reputation with their colleagues than of the limited ability of high-school students and the limited opportunities and energies of high-school teachers. The result is a type of text which is likely to be somewhat authoritative upon the subject but unserviceable in its supposed mission.

This difficulty with high-school texts is aggravated by the attitude of publishers who, wishing to kill two birds with one stone, encourage textbook-writers to prepare texts for a dual market—the college and the high school.

One who is familiar with college texts in these subjects will be convinced of the inadequacy of books used in secondary schools when he observes that such a book as Bogart, *Economic History of the United States*, is the most commonly used work for industrial history, that Cheyney, *Industrial and Social History of England*, is frequently used, and that Breasted, Ashley, and even Robinson, *Commercial Geography*, are occasionally relied upon as texts for the history of industry. In the history of commerce Day is most commonly employed with almost no other text being used in more than a very small percentage of schools.

Economics is taught from such different books as Seager; Towne, *Social Problems*; Bogart, *Economic History*; and Burch and Nearing, *Elements of Economics*. Certain texts among these have a decided preponderance in use, but there are a score of authors from whom high schools select economics texts. Commercial geography has apparently been presented in certain books which the high

schools have identified as useful, although even in this work there is a considerable variety of books used to about an equal extent.

Apparently satisfactory books for high-school use have been written in commercial law. No less than 43 of 117 reporting schools have fixed upon a certain commercial law text, while 43 are using a competing book. The remaining 32 schools are choosing texts from a variety of about a dozen titles.

In the field of communication there is chaos indeed. There is a bewildering variety of opinion regarding the right text to use. Business English is taught from such widely differing texts as Buhlig, *Business English*; Althmaier, *Commercial Correspondence*; Marshall, *Business Speller*; *Plain English in Practical Exercises*; Cody, *How to Do Business by Letter*; Atwood, *Commercial Speller*; and Gardiner, *Effective Business Letters*. In more than one case it was reported that commercial English was taught from standard texts on rhetoric and from the *Literary Digest*. Advertising and selling are taught from nearly as wide a variety of texts and usually from the identical texts that are used as a basis for business English.<sup>1</sup>

The lack of proper texts is well appreciated as among the difficulties of high-school teachers and principals. In the reports received on "difficulties or problems in the work" such comments as the following are to be found:

"It is difficult to find a good text that is not too difficult for the second-year students."

"Lack of reference books."

"No suitable textbook exists."

The foregoing statements were made with reference to industrial history, but similar statements are as frequent when one is referring to other studies. For example, when speaking of the history of commerce and the difficulties it presents, teachers make these statements:

"Book too heavy for the pupils . . . ."

"Finding a good text."

"To obtain texts and teachers whose viewpoint is non-political is very difficult."

Among the reported difficulties in economics work we find these:

"The textbooks in economics are generally too theoretical."

"A change in textbook highly desirable."

<sup>1</sup> For full discussion of business English in secondary schools see the author's article in the *English Journal*, November, 1918.

Even commercial geography comes in for a criticism in the matter of texts. "Textbooks too heavy and too filled with statistical material which is ancient history tomorrow" and "Poor textbook" are among the difficulties stated.

It is interesting to observe in connection with what has been said above regarding commercial law texts that no school reported a difficulty with its commercial law books. No great amount of criticism of existing texts was reported in connection with the difficulties in teaching advertising and business writing. Although several schools complained of the lack of adequate books, the difficulties stated were more frequently of other types.

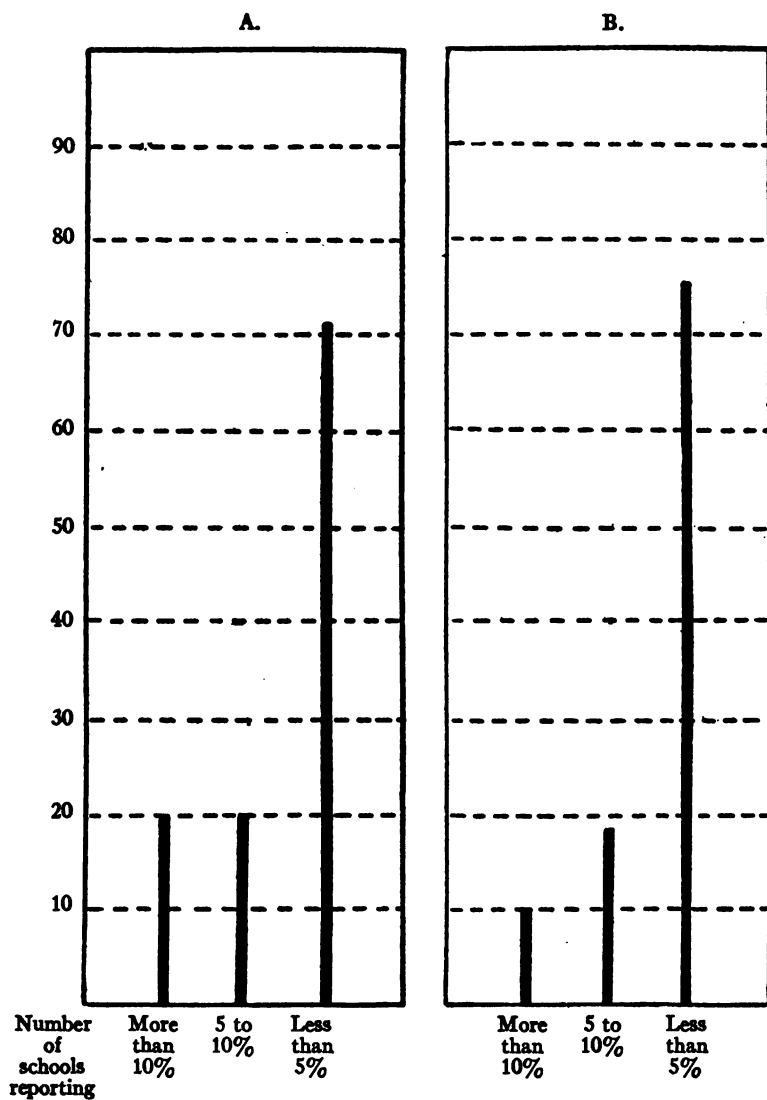
#### **OTHER REPORTED DIFFICULTIES IN SOCIAL-BUSINESS SUBJECTS**

Better textbooks are not the only need in a reorganized program for teaching social-business subjects in the secondary schools. The crowded curriculum, the limited ability of young students, the lack of required prerequisites for certain courses, the attitude of the universities in the matter of admission requirements, as well as the limitations in library, laboratory, and museum equipment, are mentioned among the handicaps of teachers.

#### **COMMERCIAL-COURSE GRADUATES WHO ENTER COLLEGE**

In Diagram 8A is shown the extent to which commercial-course graduates go to college. Diagram 8B shows the extent to which commercial-course graduates enter business schools of university grade.<sup>1</sup> One hundred twelve schools reported on this question. As the diagram shows, 71 of these reported that less than 5 per cent of their graduates went to a college of any kind and 75 reported that less than 5 per cent entered collegiate commercial schools. Twenty schools reported that between 5 and 10 per cent went on to college, and as many schools indicated that more than 10 per cent entered colleges or universities. Eighteen schools reported that between 5 and 10 per cent of their graduates entered commercial schools of collegiate grade. Ten schools indicated that more than 10 per cent of their commercial pupils advanced into schools of this character.

<sup>1</sup> In these tabulations "small," "not many," and "very few" were taken as less than 5 per cent.



**DIAGRAM 8 A and B.**—The number of schools sending commercial graduates to college (A) and to business schools of collegiate grade (B). (112 schools reporting)



## CONCLUSIONS

Electives for commercial students are, aside from the requirements of the commercial course, usually quite open and free. Is this to the advantage or disadvantage of the student? It may well be contended that the commercial student completing the technical work required of him may through the use of his free electives acquire a fairly broad training. There is no doubt that the opportunity of choosing subjects outside of his own field of work is often an advantage to the commercial student. But it is quite as likely that the free election so widely given works to the student's disadvantage. The miscellaneous and assorted fragments from which the student is permitted to choose is by no means certain to result in a well-balanced intellectual meal. There is reason to believe that much more satisfactory results could be obtained from a wisely directed scheme of requirements, having a predetermined object, and controlling in considerable measure the intellectual environment which surrounds the student. Free election of studies in the commercial course, as elsewhere, is quite consistent with our somewhat overworked policy of *laissez faire*. Under the influence of thinking in evolutionary terms *laissez faire* is, however, giving place to regulation, and under the influence of prescience in thought it is giving place to planning. More prescient elements are needed in training for business. But the real function of such elements can be accomplished only by definite requirements.

There is a need for different work for boys and girls. Almost no schools differentiate the courses for boys and girls or offer specialized training to meet the demands made upon boys. Yet a large number of schools agree, and their belief is borne out by other studies, that boys eventually perform quite a different function in business than falls to the lot of women.

The most obvious explanation for this situation—and it would seem that an explanation is necessary—is that stenography is, in a large percentage of cases, the first work undertaken by the commercial graduate.<sup>1</sup> The conclusion seems justified that the first job of its graduates—the mere stepping-stone or threshold to their careers—is the usual limit of the school's concern. Perhaps school officers are not to be blamed for this. They are servants of the public, and

<sup>1</sup> Note Table XIX, p. 48, in this connection.

the public, especially as it is personified by the business man, is not famed for making its valuations of labor in long-time terms.

A further explanation of the failure of secondary commercial courses to train for broader purposes is probably to be found in the natural lethargy which prevails in schools in common with other institutions. Furthermore, a vision of the social significance of business has not been put before the high-school teaching staff. No material, or at best but little material, to teach of business as a social function has been prepared in form suitable for high-school use.

Finally, no secondary institution, has organized really thorough-going courses clearly designed to train for business administration. The example has not been set, and in education, as elsewhere, progress is made through imitation quite as rapidly as it is induced by homilies.

The fact that a great many secondary commercial teachers use literature and speakers from the business world shows an interest in improvement. In the use, or rather the lack of use, of standardized tests the directors of secondary business courses are weak, but not necessarily wholly at fault. Real tests with a scientific basis are lacking, and it is a matter for some commendation that such tests as are available are used by more than half of the secondary schools. It is a matter of concern, however, that satisfactory tests are not available and are not in use. It is another indication of a very faulty organization of the "interstitial adjustments" of our economic order that in subjects so purely technical as stenography and typewriting a business man seeking employees must rely on such vague characterizations as "good," "fair," or "poor."

Commercial-course graduates do not enter college. The trifling percentage of those who go on either for commercial work or for other work is almost negligible. There is little in the commercial course as at present organized to lead a child who does not come from a home interested in college work toward the fields of higher education. In addition, commercial graduates are, very commonly, not prepared for college. Universities will not accept, in many instances, the technical courses for college-entrance requirements. This last matter is only another of the ways in which the commercial student is given a faulty training. Lured frequently into a narrow

technical course by the false caption "Training for Business," the student, youthful and impressionable, is given no view of the tremendous social significance of his work, and is turned out lacking the desire for more education or, having it, unqualified to proceed.

## CHAPTER V

### GENERAL CONCLUSIONS

To attempt to generalize upon the material presented in the preceding sections leads one into temptation. There comes a desire to go beyond the limits justified by the evidence examined. There is a wish to state a definite thesis for the reorganization of high-school commercial work. Such a thesis is not justified by our study. To present and support a definite plan for re-forming the commercial courses of secondary schools would involve a careful examination not only of the courses themselves, but of society. It would involve a review of the growth of secondary education and of the relation between that growth and business development. It would involve a study of the secondary commercial course as one of many institutions that function in education for business.

The conclusions which can most readily be drawn from the statistics that have been presented in this discussion have, for the most part, been placed at the conclusions of chapters. Something may perhaps be added by generalizing from these conclusions.

### TECHNICAL WORK

In the technical training which it offers, the high-school commercial course is still in the grip of tradition. Although the courses given have been considerably multiplied by business demands and as a result of the efforts of salesmen for textbook and machine companies, many features of the course are almost static.

In its technical training for business, no proved policy has been adopted. Courses are of every variety of length, and, although there is some apparent tendency toward uniformity, there is no reason to believe that this is the result of scientific experiment.

In other ways as well, technical work is lacking in standards. Scientific methods for measuring the quality of work have not been developed, and, although teachers indicate a desire to use such tests

as are available, there remains an unfortunate lack of educational measurements.

Requirements in technical subjects are based largely upon what school officers believe to be the immediate demands of business, with little regard for the more permanent needs of the student.

#### SOCIAL-BUSINESS WORK

In the social-business subjects offered, the weaknesses of the present courses gather around the lack of clearly defined purposes. The statistics gathered failed to indicate that secondary commercial educators have in mind a definite aim. There seems to exist a wide lack of knowledge—even of opinion—as to what the school should attempt to teach the student. The variety of requirements, the variety of textbooks, the variety of lengths of courses, all indicate this situation. Perhaps most of all is it indicated by the lack of requirements. Although many social-business subjects are offered, few are demanded. To put requirements in a course indicates a determination of ends and a determination of instruments. Being uncertain of their ends and certain only that their instruments are questionable, the organizers of high-school business courses have shifted the burden to the students. They have left the social-business subjects for election.

The greatest strength of the secondary commercial course as regards social-business subjects is the very evident desire to do something. Nearly every school offers such subjects and indicates that they are of increasing moment. There is a strong spirit to socialize the business course. That spirit is in need of guidance.

#### POLICIES AND METHODS

Policies and methods are subsequent to a determination of purposes. The methods of schools in business teaching are weak, therefore, in that they are not instruments which have been devised to accomplish definite ends. There is a need for surveys and studies which will help to determine purposes. There is a need for a study of the functions of the high-school commercial course in modern functionalized society. Such studies as have been made, as, for example, the Cleveland survey, indicate that present methods are as often wrong as right. Surveys indicate—indeed, school princi-

pals admit—the desirability of different training for boys and girls, yet almost no schools have diversified courses. There is need for such a quantity of evidence and for such evidence for every locality as will make the objects of business training too apparent to be overlooked.

A survey of present conditions in secondary commercial work leads one to optimism rather than to pessimism. The institution is alive, tremendously virile. The gigantic gains in number of students, the interest of the public, the new courses which are being constantly introduced, and the demands for commercial teachers, all give evidence that the waters are stirring. No less clear is the need for reorganization; perhaps better, for guidance in development. The high-school commercial course is active. Shall its activity be wasted, harmful, or of invaluable aid to society? The answer lies largely in the amount of prescient thinking which will be done by those who are in a position to influence its destiny.



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